

Work release

Benefit-cost estimates updated December 2015. Literature review updated August 2015.

Current estimates replace old estimates. Numbers will change over time as a result of model inputs and monetization methods.

The WSIPP benefit-cost analysis examines, on an apples-to-apples basis, the monetary value of programs or policies to determine whether the benefits from the program exceed its costs. WSIPP's research approach to identifying evidence-based programs and policies has three main steps. First, we determine "what works" (and what does not work) to improve outcomes using a statistical technique called meta-analysis. Second, we calculate whether the benefits of a program exceed its costs. Third, we estimate the risk of investing in a program by testing the sensitivity of our results. For more detail on our methods, see our [technical documentation](#).

Program Description: Work release programs are a form of partial confinement enabling certain offenders to serve all or a portion of their prison/jail sentence in a residential facility while employed in the community.

Benefit-Cost Summary

Program benefits		Summary statistics	
Participants	\$0	Benefit to cost ratio	\$9.32
Taxpayers	\$1,951	Benefits minus costs	\$5,736
Other (1)	\$3,844	Probability of a positive net present value	98 %
Other (2)	\$630		
Total	\$6,426		
Costs	(\$689)		
Benefits minus cost	\$5,736		

The estimates shown are present value, life cycle benefits and costs. All dollars are expressed in the base year chosen for this analysis (2014). The economic discount rates and other relevant parameters are described in our [technical documentation](#).

Detailed Monetary Benefit Estimates

Source of benefits	Benefits to				Total benefits
	Participants	Taxpayers	Other (1)	Other (2)	
From primary participant					
Crime	\$0	\$1,951	\$3,843	\$974	\$6,768
Adjustment for deadweight cost of program	\$0	\$1	\$1	(\$344)	(\$342)
Totals	\$0	\$1,951	\$3,844	\$630	\$6,426

We created the two "other" categories to report results that do not fit neatly in the "participant" or "taxpayer" perspectives. In the "Other (1)" category we include the benefits of reductions in crime victimization, the economic spillover benefits of improvement in human capital outcomes, and the benefits from private or employer-paid health insurance. In the "Other (2)" category we include estimates of the net changes in the value of a statistical life and net changes in the deadweight costs of taxation.

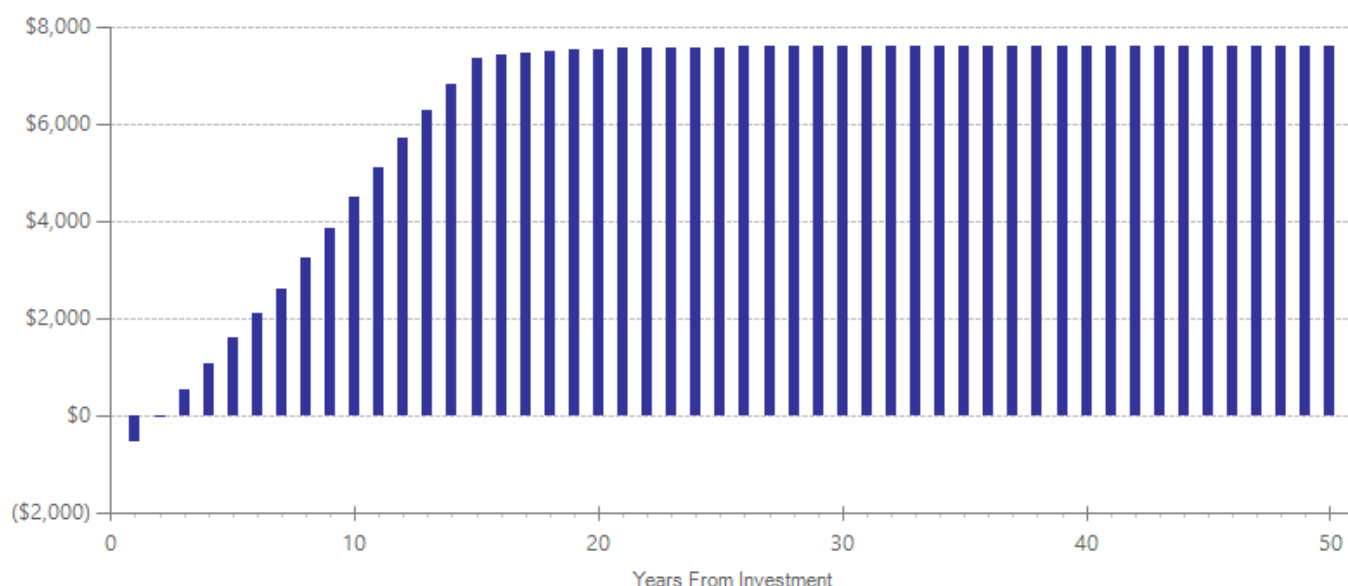
Detailed Cost Estimates

	Annual cost	Program duration	Year dollars	Summary statistics	
Program costs	\$43,071	1	2007	Present value of net program costs (in 2014 dollars)	(\$689)
Comparison costs	\$42,456	1	2007	Uncertainty (+ or - %)	10 %

Drake, E. (2007, November). Does participation in Washington's work release facilities reduce recidivism? (Document No. 07-11-1201). Olympia: Washington State Institute for Public Policy.

The figures shown are estimates of the costs to implement programs in Washington. The comparison group costs reflect either no treatment or treatment as usual, depending on how effect sizes were calculated in the meta analysis. The uncertainty range is used in Monte Carlo risk analysis, described in our [technical documentation](#).

Cumulative Net Cash Flows Over Time (Non-Discounted Dollars)



Meta-Analysis of Program Effects

Outcomes measured	Primary or secondary participant	No. of effect sizes	Treatment N	Unadjusted effect size (random effects model)		Adjusted effect sizes and standard errors used in the benefit-cost analysis					
						First time ES is estimated			Second time ES is estimated		
				ES	p-value	ES	SE	Age	ES	SE	Age
Crime	Primary	7	18191	-0.081	0.011	-0.074	0.029	33	-0.074	0.029	43

Citations Used in the Meta-Analysis

- Berk, J. (2008). *Does work release work?* Unpublished manuscript, Brown University, Providence, RI. Retrieved June 28, 2011 from <http://client.norc.org/jole/soleweb/8318.pdf>
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- Duwe, G. (2014). *An outcome evaluation of a prison work release program: Estimating its effects on recidivism, employment and cost avoidance*. Minnesota Department of Corrections. St. Paul, MN.
- Jeffrey, R., & Woolpert, S. (1974). Work furlough as an alternative to incarceration. *The Journal of Criminal Law & Criminology*, 65(3), 405-415.
- LeClair, D., & Guarino-Ghezzi, S. (1991). Does incapacitation guarantee public safety? Lessons from the Massachusetts furlough and prerelease programs. *Justice Quarterly*, 8(1), 9-36.
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Printed on 03-04-2016



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